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Voices of the Silent Things

William Stapleton Long





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VOICES OF THE SILENT THINGS

WILLIAM STAPLETON LONG

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BOSTON
THE GORHAM PRESS
1914

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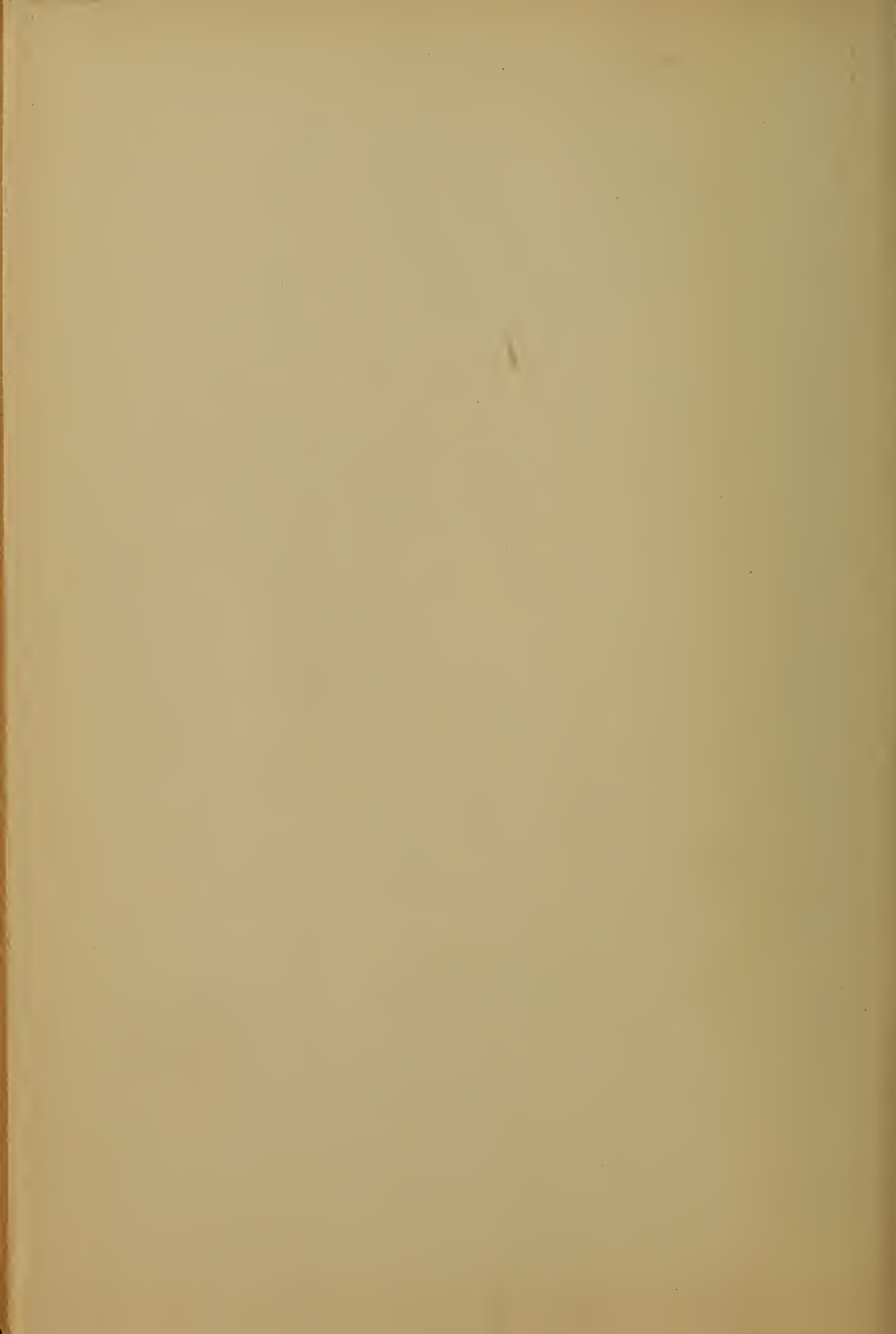
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TO HER WHOSE VOICE, IN LOVE, HAS EVER URGED
ME ON TO SEEK ALL THAT IS HIGHEST AND
BEST IN THOUGHT AND FEELING AND IN
THE EXPRESSION OF THESE, AND TO
WHOM I OWE ALL THAT THERE IS
OF INSPIRATION IN THESE
LINES, I LOVINGLY AND
HUMBLY DEDICATE
THIS BOOK.



PREFACE.

To those who wonder that this volume should be called, "Voices of the Silent Things," the author wishes to explain that this alone seems to express what were his own feelings when these verses were composed. In collecting all of them together in one volume under this head, he has held to the idea that each one should be the voice, whether in cry or song, of something, which otherwise, could not have found expression. And tho some of them seem to have come from his own heart, in joy or pain or longing, this heart has seemed to him, at such times, not a part of himself, using his own intelligence, but a separate something, different and distinct, finding utterance through the virtue of its own emotion. And thus, he wishes to eliminate himself and his own personality, not through modesty, but because the reader must know that a *soul* has spoken, if he would be in sympathy with what has been said.

As to the *Voices* themselves, the author has little inclination to offer excuses either for the form or quality of their notes. He realizes that all men sometimes have thoughts for which they can make no attempt at expression. He realizes too, that still oftener, perhaps, men feel, when in the act of expression, that the words fall flat and lifeless while they themselves grasp helplessly at the too

PREFACE

subtle creations, or visitants, of their brains. And still other than, or beyond these difficulties, there is a realization of shadowy fancies and conceptions which flit swiftly along the outer halls of consciousness or hover vaguely above the dimmer realms of thought. But they are not yet thoughts in themselves, nor yet can they breathe in the expression of a thought. They too are Silent Things and their voices are as yet, unheard. Perhaps they suggest a song for the future or perhaps they influence present songs. Certainly their flight must ever cause a lingering pang of longing with an attendant thrill of hope. In common with other men, the author is very conscious of these failings. Each reading of any single page brings vague hauntings of rumbling discords and of harmonies unattained. And when the whole is summed up in prospect, he is more than grateful for the refuge of a name; he is glad to retreat behind the Silent Things, and let their Voices alone be heard.

WILLIAM STAPLETON LONG.

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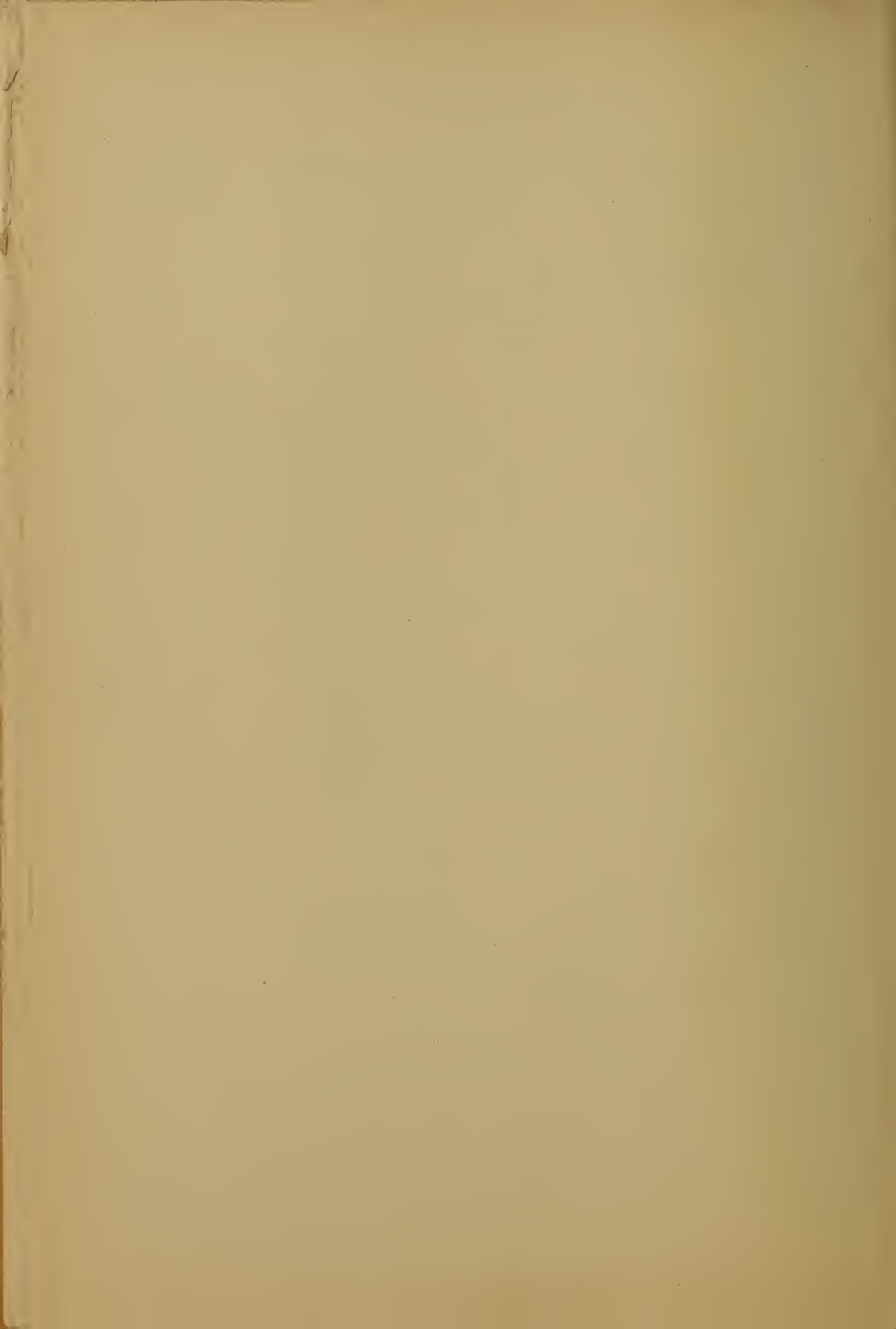
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PART I
POEMS OF LONGING



THE HERMIT'S PRAYER

Oh, for the wings of a chainless mind,
And the power of a soul that is free,
To soar like the breath of a Heavenly wind
Thru the realm of mystery.

To fold like the tents of an Arab of old,
And fade in a maze of transcendent thought;
Or fall like a shower of atomic gold,
And resume where the treasures of ages are
brought.

When the veil of the future is drawn from our view,
And the shackles that bind us are riven in twain,
Then to rise like a phoenix—deathless and new—
Search for the Hidden, and not search in vain.

OH, LET ME FLEE

Oh, let me flee from the cold and the gray;
From the wavering, hungering throng;
Let me breathe out the life of my soul in a lay,
And live in the breath of my song.

Let me flee on balm-kissed winds of the South,
To a fairyland, dreambuilt bower,—
With a song in my heart, and a song in my mouth,
And a kiss for each lingering hour.

Let me dream then of love, and my maiden-o'-
dreams;
Let me thrill with a rapture no less
Then I felt when the moon lit her own silver beams
In the bright eyes that dared my caress.

Oh, I'm tired of the rose that blooms only today
And fades with the warm flush of morning,
And I long for the gladness that lingers alway,
With a hope that sets only in dawning.

PERPLEXITY

Oh, darkened Human Vision, Thou!

Why must the past, and passing years
Show only sorrows, hopes, and fears,
And leave the source of light so low?

Why must we pause with bated breath,
Implore for faith and hope to win;
Fall down before besetting sin,
And seek for life in hopeless death?

Our works are corals, pregnant bones,
Together knit, by Time, unchanged;
Uprising, ladder-like, arranged,—
Receding waves must leave them—stones.

Our life is but a rise and fall;
Our being but an *is* and *was*;
We grasp, we cling, we fear to lose,
But only gain in losing all.

LONELINESS

Ah, Memory come to my slumber, tonight,
For this heart is so tired and lonely.
Thru all the long hours, let purest delight
Fill my dreaming with tho'ts of her only.

Take me back to the days when we wandered so
free,
She and I, thru the roses together.
Let me hear the sweet words that she whispered
to me,
As we talked of—the crops and the weather.

Let me hear her again, sing the songs that we
loved,
In the shadowy stillness of evening,
Let me catch once again the bright glances that
proved
Her soft whispers too true for deceiving.

Oh, take me to her, dearest Memory, Thou,
For I'm lonely, and tired and sad-hearted.
Let her fingers smooth out the hard lines from
my brow,
With a touch of the rapture, departed.

COULD I BUT KNOW

Could I but know how warm spring rain
Can rouse the tiny seed-heart's rest,
And send a stem to breathe again
And bloom and fade on Nature's breast;

And could I know how life that's still
Can wake a thousand times again
To feel and know, and pulse and thrill,
In mingled ecstasy and pain.

Then I could reach beyond this veil
Of years in flesh that binds me here;
And sing where songs are not to wail;
And feel where sense is not to fear.

For I have felt,—I know not how—
That somewhere in the vast *Has Been*
Was something vaster than the *Now*—
That this and that, are all akin.

Are all akin, and yet how far
This frenzied fancy seems to span,
When wandering from earth to star
To find the destined course of Man.

For thru that cycle of star-lumined ways,
The worlds in concert, seem to move,
Existences, in vast arrays,
Stretch out 'neath soft-hued rays of love.

VACATION LONGINGS

Away with your pratings of *calics* and dances;
Of banquets and balls and receptions to come.
I long for the rapturous, soul-filling glances,
The songs and the smiles of the *girls* at home.

I long for the gate 'neath the old weeping willows;
For the moonlit path that winds thru the grove,
When the soft breeze of summer wafts love on
its billows,
And the stars seem to melt in an essence of love.

I long for the woods and the dreamful fancies
That fall from the wings of sweet dryads and
fays,
As they wind thru the maze of their light, airy
dances,
And silently fade in the depths of the maze.

I long for the cool, grassy bank of the river,
Where the foliage of June keeps back the June
sun.
There the soft rush of water goes murmuring, ever,
And drowning faint memories of duties undone.

I long for the close of a day as it passes,
When the wandering ones shall be gathered
again;
With Father all snug in his big chair and glasses,
And Mother to lead in some old fashioned strain.

How sweet is the thought of these days hovering
o'er us!

How wild the pulsations of hearts that are
young!

For the glad hopes of youth hold rapture before us,
And love breathes pure in the songs that are
sung.

COME SOON, SWEET NIGHT

Come soon, Sweet Night, and let me hear
The trilling of thine unseen choir;
And let mine eyes be dazzled by
Thy lights; and let me feel the soft,
Delicious tingling of thy breath,
And cry again, Sweet Night, come soon.

PART II

MOMENTS OF LEISURE



A VIEW OF LIFE

For him whose soul is fed with rays of hope
Shed freely from a healthy view of life,
There is a solace in dark hours of doubt,
A radiant course, between him and the tomb.
A Father's love once placed his children here,
And tho these children sometimes seem to stray,
This Father's love, a guardian angel is—
Unseen, but surely guiding these poor souls—
“Lone wandering,—but not lost.”

Hast thou dim visions of a life sublime?
And dost thou hear vague whispers from the past
That seem to bring back scenes of other days,
Before thy soul, ethereal and free,
Was summoned from some far-off, unknown realm
To be imprisoned in an earthly frame?
Or dost thou feel, when night is o'er the earth
And thou canst almost grasp the other worlds,
That, somewhere, in that dreamful fathomless,
Thou hast affiance with some kindred thing?
And from the lingering spirit of these dreams,
Dost thou not feel an inward rapture rise;
A voiceless pleading for a higher sphere;
A vain attempt to mingle with the void?

Yet tho'ts like these come not to thee alone,
But thru the varied cults and creeds of Man,
And down the cycle of revolving Time,
These dreams have been companions to thy kind.
Our fathers, long before us, sought to climb
To freer, purer places in the air;
And struggling with the shackles of our flesh,
Have found that they must, after all, be *men*.
So can we not take their experience,
And armed with faith in God's eternal care,
Look calmly on the fact of our existence,
And strive to make this world a place of joy?

There is a smile upon the face of Earth,
And in the softened arching of the skies,
The mighty visage of a Maker seems
To smile back on His silent handiwork.
How small a part of this vast firmament
Is Man, the pigmy, mighty lord of all!
He bears no semblance to a Titan brood.
And yet, enclosed in that Likened Form,
He feels the pulsing of a living soul.
This soul, a tho't from out the mind of God.
And now detached from that vast Infinite,
Has softened to finite earthly glow,
That needs must wait His breath to fan a flame.

But tho we cannot compass as we wish,
A larger sphere of life and usefulness,
The closing touch of any earthly day
Need never fall upon us as we sit
In idle brooding, with no labor done.
Nor should the dreamful darkness of the night
Enclose us in the downy arms of sleep,
Unless the balanced actions of the day
Have made it fit that we should wake again.
To thee young man, just thinking of a life,
There is a gentle whisper, then a call.
Must it do more than merely sound thy name,
Before thy lips shall shout, I can and will?
Nay! rise from out thy dreaming and thy doubt,
Hold out a helping hand to those around;
Look not for pleasure at the wanton feast;
Nor search for glory in the thoughts of men.
Thou canst not find the Holy Grail to bring
Thee fame. But He who blest the widow's mite,
Is somewhere, waiting for thy broken crust
To feed the beggar—while thou bringest drink.

Yet do not shrink before a life of toil
Among thy kind. For tho thy heart may bleed
In bringing others cheer; vast legions of
God's angels hover 'round thy head. Go forth
Young man, and in the exaltation of
Thy hope, sing joyful anthems, and be glad.

A DREAM

Enclosèd once, in arms of soothing sleep,
I heard a voice peal out in loud command:
"Come, go with me, thou son of Mortal Man
And look on one whose works have made him
great."

I listened, thrilled with doubt and apprehension,
I trembled, tho the voice seemed soft and kind.
But then mine eyes beheld a godlike form
That seemed to fill all space with beams of light.
He spoke, and strains of purest harmony
Poured smoothly from the swift and fluent lips.
"Fear not my friend," he murmured gently,
"I bear no tho't of harm to fallen Man.
I only would that to me were entrusted,
The power to make him what he once has been.
My name is Fame, I rule, with power supreme,
O'er shades of those, who once the scepter swayed.
Cast off the weight of earthly fallacies
And train thine eyes to look on heavenly scenes."
He paused and turned, the sound died down.
Then led the way, like Hermes thru the air,
I followed, thrilled with awe and expectation,
And filled with tho'ts that lie too deep for words:

The earth soon fades thru fleecy clouds of mist.
The planets pass in waves of liquid gold.
But then I feel a change come in the ether,
And know that we are close to scenes of bliss.
Once more I hear the soft and silvery sound.
My guide turns round and speaks again to me:
"In this fair clime, Departed Greatness now
Lives free from tho'ts of sorrow and of pain.
Come now and see, and seeing, understand

That graves are not for souls that cannot die.”
We came at last, into a pillared temple
Of massive marble, vast and beautiful.
And round the hall, as tho in consultation,
The lights of ages, proudly sit enthroned.
And all eyes turn unconsciously
To where the brightest one in all the throng
Sits calm and still—immovable—
His presence shadowing all the lesser spheres.

I need not name this central figure,
But only speak of him as he deserves;
For who can fail to know that Washington,
And only he might justify such praise.
His broad brow gleamed, irradiant;
His eyes were stern, set back, and full of fire;
His nose seemed like some ancient Roman's;
His lips were firm, as tho engraved in stone.
'Tis not so hard to speak of his appearance,
But how can I, who have no mint for words,
Give voice to tho'ts that surged so rapidly,
As I gazed upwards, raptured and enthralled.
My mind rushed back to scenes of war and trouble,
I saw him in the days “that tried men's souls,”
First, fighting red men in the wilderness,
And then for country, home, and liberty.
Yet war alone, did not make him immortal,—
Napoleon made more children fatherless;
But Washington made light to shine in darkness,
And raising Freedom o'er a Tyrant's will,
He left an altar, where he found a throne.
He did not fight because he loved the battle,
He did not “wade thru slaughter to a throne”
He only fought, when war drove furiously
And duty gave the call he must obey.

Just then I heard a long drawn murmur
Roll onward, like the sound of distant seas.
And then a voice broke o'er the assembly,
To crave attention of that august throng.
At length he spoke, the vast expanse
Caught up the sound, and passed the words along;
The hall resounded with the sound because
His words, his theme, his speech was Washington:
"All hail this One!" He cried, impassioned,
"Uniting wisdom, love and firm resolve.
He stands alone, himself a constellation
Of starlike virtues, he the sovereign star."
I cannot write it as he spoke it then,
We have no words to voice such heavenly sounds.
But still sometimes, I hear the distant echo
Borne softly on the wings of transient tho't.

JACK JOUETT'S RIDE

PRELUDE

Hark, while the heralds of glory in chorus
Sing of the ride of Jack Jouett the bold;
Listen to deeds of the heroes before us,
Deeds that the sires of our fathers have told.

Listen, and let their wild dangers and daring
Kindle anew all our patriot love;
Point out the founders of glory we're sharing,
Then with due rev'rence our gratitude prove.

Theirs was a wilderness, cursed by oppression,
Ours is a glorious continent State;
They in the shadow of death wrung a cession—
Peace and good will from a sentence of hate.

Proudly we've honored them, honored our heroes;
All but one hero, theme of this song.
Pay then, the tribute our loyalty owes,
Hail him our hero, his glory prolong.

'Twas seventeen hundred eighty one,
And the warmth of June had just begun
To deck the hills and vales and skies
Of old Virginia. And the cries
Of feathered folk, in joy or fright,
Soothed the day or roused the night.
But hearts of men now burned with care
As Hope grew faint, and grim Despair
Hovered around with bated breath,
Banishing liberty, beckoning death.

Philips and Arnold, foe and knave,
Coming up the James to Richmond, gave
Such fright that all in terror saw
Small hope for makers of the law,
Who then a second time adjourned,
And all their tho'ts to safety turned.
Both Gov'nor and Assembly, fleeing still,
Came soon to peaceful Charlottesville
Where Monticello's crest serene
As old Olympus guards the scene.

And there two score of solons grave
Wisely pondered how to save
The Old Dominion from her foes,
And how to relieve her people's woes.
Right well they might, for council true
No wiser, truer men e'er knew,—
Among them Light Horse Harry Lee,
Nelson, and Harrison, and he
Whose wild-impassioned battle cry
Made freemen unafraid to die.

While these held council in the town,
From Monticello's height looked down
Great Jefferson, the illustrious sage,
Whose fiery pen, defying rage
And threats of king and tyranny,
Had once declared his country free.
On his advice now leaned the State;
And on his head, now England's hate,
Reflected, tho it fiercely gleamed,
To Patriots, a halo seemed.

Soon Lord Cornwallis came in haste,
Laying Virginia farms in waste;
And then at old Hanover learned
The way his fleeing prize had turned.
Then Tartleton, dashing trooper, brave,
He called, and hurried orders gave:
"Ride with your troop, and swift, nor stay,
Till Gov'nor Jefferson and they,
Whose rebel necks so stiff are raised,
Shall, captive, bend 'neath British gaze."

No need for more, the trooper's face
Lit up and beamed around the place.
Then loud he called: "To horse! my men,
The game's afoot, we'll ride again."
All mounted then in haste, and all
Pressed willing spurs at Tartleton's call,
And galloped close with deafening tread
While Tartleton's big black courser led.
And ere the cock at midnight crew,
His rein at Cuckoo Tavern drew.

Short space he paused and scarce had gone
When Jouett, keeper of the Swan
In Charlottesville, on business there,
Hurried to find his good bay mare.
Then tightening girth and grasping rein,
His feet in stirrups pressed again,
And quick his voice, like love's caress,
As softly urged his bonny Bess,
Who sprang away with right good will
Along the road to Charlottesville.

Soon out of beaten path he fled
Into a secret trail which led
Safe thru the woods and nearer far,
But grown unkempt in Nature's war.
From nearby trees long branches hung,
And tangled vines beneath them swung,
While crumbling trunks of ash and oak,
Tho lowly lain, still often broke
The courser's pace. And once entwines
A maze of bushes, wood, and vines

Around her feet. But soon the steed
Arose, and from the maze is freed.
Then lightly leaps o'er gullied waste
'Neath flowers and weeds, in ambush placed.
Her rider crouches close nor fears
The angry swinging brier that tears
His unprotected face. And when
The East is tinged with gray again,
The welcome light his hopes restored
And brought him soon to Milton ford.

A moment's pause, the courser drank,
Then plunged upon the further bank,
While Jouett called to passersby:
"The British come! To arms!" or "Fly!"
Two weary miles alone remained,
And in ten minutes more he gained
The lofty goal, where Jefferson
His morning meal had just begun,
And with his noble family sate
To entertain their guests of state.

But quick the hasty call he heard,
And with a gracious smile and word
Their pardon craved, and coming out
Upon the porch to ask about
The noise, saw Jouett where he stood,
All torn, and streaked with dust and blood.
“What ho, my friend!” he cried, amazed.
“What peril prompts such desperate haste?”
“The British, Gov’nor, Tarleton’s nigh,
And I have come to bid you fly.”

No further pause did Jouett make
For tired horse or rider’s sake,
But turned his steed and quickly hied
Full gallop down the mountain side.
A few wild moments more and thru
The startled streets he rode, and drew
His rein before the gliding Swan,
Then gave to idlers on the lawn
Quick warning of the coming foe
And bade them to th’ Assembly go.

And straight was wild-eyed tumult borne
Thru each defenceless street that morn.
The Assembly met, adjourned, and fled,
While Jouett with the fleeing sped
Safe o’er the Ridge to Staunton town,
And laughed as British steeds gave down.
The Gov’nor quick his family sent
To Blenheim, he more slowly went;
Then joined them and at Amherst paused
While Tarleton cursed the flight he’d caused;

And when the foiled foe had gone,
Jack Jouett rode back to the Swan,
And there began to feel the pain
Of tired limbs and wounds and strain;
But happy 'cause of duty done—
His rulers saved, a contest won.
The Assembly voted spurs and sword
And grateful thanks upon him poured,
Which he received from Jefferson
As token of his midnight run.

ANDROMACHE'S COMPLAINT

And is it thus that gods assume the right
To hurl vile torments on a weaker race?
Ye highly thronèd sons of monstrous birth,
And ye supremely throned o'er all the rest,
Zeus, Almighty, Creator, Zeus the Just.
Ah! Zeus the Just—author of Justice and
Of law. Is there a law, too high for thee
To crush? Alas, that I should feel thy wrath,
When I, in all humility, alone
Wast proud to be Hector's Andromache,
His own beloved. Yet did I offer insult
To the gods? or did I fail to sacrifice,
With holy rev'rence, all thou didst
Require? Nay! even I wast pure; and as
I loved my Hector, I loved thee, and all
The gods, and did adore the awful name
Of Zeus. But she—Ah! fatal she of Troy,—
Nay, not of Troy,—of Sparta, Helen the
Beautiful; whose cursèd beauty did undo
Us all. But was she pure, and did she love
The am'rous Swan, her father Zeus? For her
Thou didst decree vast Troy must fall; and all
The princely sons of Teucer's race must die
The victims of a broken vow. But yet
Not all didst thou decree. For thou wast still
A god, and not a goddess, and couldst not lend
The lashing fury of thy spleen to fall
Upon the helpless heads of womankind.
But even then thou couldst have laid a check
Upon fell Juno's wrath, when she wouldst send
Into a loathsome death in life, the lovely

Daughters of Priam's house, when they, with
 hearts

Afire with anguish for their absent lords,
Must stay behind the fancied safety of
Their bowers. Thou didst onetime have a heart
Of melting tenderness and pity for
Our kind. What change did come, that thou
 couldst not

Send Hermes with a message to these bowers
That Troy must fall? Then we indeed more
 peace

Had found. For on the morning of that day,
These woman's hearts, their womanly frames had
 sent

And at the peril of their princely lords,
These woman's breasts had caught the angry darts
And been a sheath for thirsty Grecian swords.
But thou didst give full sway to Juno's spleen.
And when my Hector fell before that Greek,
E'en death thou didst deny his other heart—
And I must live! Ah! live indeed—without my
 Hector!

But can I say *my Hector* now? or am
I his? Alas! does he still love his own
Andromache? O Death! why dost thou wait?
Why dost thou leave this heart of Hector's stay
To press the bosom of a victor lord?
When in the fiery glance of that lord's eyes,
Methinks I sometimes catch exultant gleams
That glow from fierce Achilles' ire, as when
He rode triumphant o'er my murdered love.
And must this son his father's wrath still hold,
That as he uses fell usurped power

To prostitute our ties of deathless love,
He still can mock dead Hector's shade
And rob the furies of their destined rite?
Oh, let me die. I do not ask for hope
In death. I do not even ask to find
My lord. But in the darkness of some cave,
I long to weep away my shame—and die.

APOSTROPHE TO LIFE

O thou unknown and gently budding Life,
I see thee in the rosy-tinted dawn,
As petal after petal dost unfold;
And all the wandering zephyrs of the morn
Seem laden with the nectar of thy breath.
Thou art not gloomy, stern, and cruel, Life.
'Tis only in the frozen hearts of men
Thou seemest cold. The chill of winter and
The shades of night have now no part in thy
Majestic loveliness. But thou art now
Accompanied by the gladness of a lark's
Refrain. The vari-colored robe of spring
Adorns thy path. And here, a little babbling
Brooklet trickles on to lend its chord
Harmonious to the merry tinkle of
Full many sweet-toned instruments.

But Thou

Art grand and awful, Life. The rumbling peal
That heralds each new day, rolls slowly on—
And 'tis a constant call to higher things.
We hear, and visions of a troubled world
Succeed. And yet thou 'rt not a tossing sea
Of turmoil and of strife. The unquiet minds
Of men have made the city's roar. But thou
O Life, hast higher joys than these. To thee
The voice of love is raised expectantly;
And whispering, it tells of evening quiet
And holy calm, around the fireside glow.
The glimmer of a taper lights the scene
And sends a ray to light the world outside.
'Tis thus, O Life, that thou art truly filled
With rapture. And in thee are joys, unknown
To those who wander in the miry maze
Ambition spreads. But when to man shall come
Diviner tho'ts of peace, the restless longing
Of awakened souls shall search for love,
And find that *love is life*.

PART III
SONNETS

CONSECRATION

I pray Thee, Lord, for some great task to do.
A task of larger weight and measure than
The tasks that thou didst give, at first, to Man,
When he the joys of Paradise o'erthrew.
I feel not now, a longing for the praise
And cheers of men, that come for things achieved.
I would not stride o'er ruins of things believed;
Nor seek my light o'er all the rest to raise.
But I would find some hidden needs which burn
With voiceless agony, the human heart;
And lifting then, the mystic veil impart
A balm, for which the tossing spirits yearn.
Oh, then to Thee may this poor soul return,—
So full of tender pitying love Thou art.

ANTICIPATION

As free as wingèd birds of air
That lightly rise and softly skim
The dizzy clouds; as cherubim
That dream and live without a care;
So I sometimes, can feel the surge
Of boundless freedom pulse along
These veins. And bursting into song
Of joy and hope, forget the dirge
That man so oft must hear, in this
His earthly pilgrimage. And then,
In fancy, I can hear a strain
That brings another world to this.
The world *to be* now *seems* now *is*,
And souls, imprisoned, *live* again.

WHAT SHE SAID

The stars are shining, Sweet, why seem so dull?
The nightbirds sing of joy, why stay so sad?
And if the eyes that love, restrain the full
Intention of their glance, why not be glad?
For love that's worth the winning, must be sought
And eyes that wander, must be shown the eyes
That love. And hearts that love not must be
taught

To love. And all must learn the joy that lies
In hearts that know a kindred heart, attune;
And feel a kindred thrill, in joy and pain;
And know the way, when parting comes too soon,
To wait and love, till meetings come again.
My heart is free, teach it to love, and then,
I'll teach thee more of love, and be thine own.

WHAT HE SAID

Ah, Love, I know that I am dull and sad.
And yet, I feel that all is not of pain,
For why should I in childish faith be glad
And feed a hope that lingers but in vain?
I know that love is sometimes wooed and won
By deeds of might and softly whispered words.
But how can I whom Love has all undone,
Find deeds and words, which only Love affords?
Let him that loves not sing of love. And let
The careless heart make others care. But I,
A helpless slave to love, can only fret,
And live, and love thee, as the days go by.
And in this sadness, all my joy must lie;
But still, in silence, I will love thee yet.

LOVE'S DAWNING

Dimly above the fading afterglow
Of youth and youthful loves, I see, or seem
To see the rising glory of a far off gleam
Whose parent orb with certain sweep and slow
Ascends the starry heavens of my soul;
Until its beams no longer dimly shine,
Nor leave a seeming in their obvious sign,
But in a golden wavelike radiance roll.
And I, though blind, in blinded ecstasy,
Like sun-adoring Magi to the Sun,
Fall now devoutly with my prayer begun,
In worship that is not idolatry,—
Worshipping Thee, mine earthly, Holy One,
Divinely human, still divine to me.

LOVE'S MORNING

Dimly I saw Thee, now full clear I see
As thru the windows of our souls that light
Pours in ethereal waves to bear this sight,
Charged with devotion, love, and constancy.
Then there was seeming, now, in truth, I know,
And knowing, thrill with mingled joy and pain,—
Joy that o'erwhelms me, bears me up again,
Then racks me with the fierceness of its flow.
Know then if each wild longing could express,
In gemlike words, this vast unuttered love,
Thine ears would tingle as such words would
 prove
Its breadth and length and depth of tenderness.
Nor need a forced imagination move
Those words to breathe a whisper of excess.

VISIONS OF LOVE'S NOONDAY

Dimly again between the radiant beams
Of present morning, glorious and real,
Full many rare and lovely visions steal.
And first this Love's effulgent Noonday seems
To flit before me, beckoning apace,
And sometimes pointing out a struggle won,
For wealth or fame, or busy plans begun;
And sometimes to a likeness of thy face.
But always in the cycle of my thought
As it anticipates the rush of years,
Whether it finds a smile or bitter tears,
Thy soul and mine in rip'ning love are caught
As one, unmindful of Time's dark'ning fears,
Serenely trusting what each day has brought.

VISIONS OF LOVE'S EVENING

And dimly still a fainter vision waits
Beyond the portals of Love's Noonday dream,
Thru which, at last, the grayer fancies stream,
As Evening stillness hovers round the gates.
Our day seems drawing nearly to its close;
Our Present mingles strangely with the Past.
Yet to the Morrow, many glances, cast,
Prove that the mortal tenders what he owes.
And softly, soon, the dreamful shades alight,—
A twilight covering in a tender gloom,
Guarding the sacred myst'ries of the tomb,
When our twin souls are tingling for a flight
Into the fulness of a boundless room,
Beyond the shadows of abounding night.

VISIONS OF LOVE'S MORROW

And still more dimly from beyond that night
To my poor eyes next comes a wond'rous glow
Of far-off radiance from a realm aglow
With dazzling splendor, bursting into sight.
As hand in hand, we tread the cloud-paved way,
At first with childish wonder and with fears,
Until a newborn grace and strength appears
To greet the rosy opening of the day.
And still, with long-used tenderness, we move
With life in Love's Tomorrow just begun,
Serenely tuned to let the rising Sun,
Of each successive day-existence, prove
Our souls, tho sep'rate, still forever one
Thruout our long eternity of Love.

ABSENT AT CHRISTMAS

It seems tonight that I can feel a soft
And subtle tingling in the dark, and soon
A wordless joy comes on and on, as oft
Mine ears catch distant bellnotes, all attune
To choral symphonies that pulse along
The snow-clad hills. But far away I know
Are many hearts expanding with a song
Of Yuletide gladness. And the Christmas glow
Upon the hearth, sends out to all its own
Red tribute to the genial time. And lest
My heart be chilled, because it is alone,
I'll think of thee, my Love, and be possessed
Of dreamland fancies, and enraptured fly
To meet thee, hovering in a dreamland sky.

WITH A GIFT

I bring thee this mute token to declare
That I have tho't of thee, and wish to pay
Some tribute to the one who prompts each prayer,
And lends a spark for each half-whispered lay.
Yet I would not bring thee a *gift*, in pride,—
A trifle, this; but still a token, sure,
Of love's expression which my heart has tried,
But all in vain, because that love is pure.
Take this, I beg, and let it, silent, tell
The story that my lips cannot express.
And maybe it, in silence, will excel
The tales which some, in honeyed words confess.
Whate'er betide, I cannot love thee less,
If they find words to plead with thee too well.

DEDICATION

(Written for the first issue of a Teacher's Magazine)

All ye whose hearts have felt a tender thrill
When little out-stretched hands, for little feet,
Seek aid; whose love makes even cries seem sweet,
And bids an answer to each "Why?" instill;
And ye with minds, by larger tho'ts inspired,
Whose learning seems, for Learning's self, a goal,
Reached only by a shedding-out of soul
Along a path where lesser minds have tired;
All ye to whom a worker's call is clear,
To whom in service all of joy is found,
Here let your labours, your successes sound;
Here bring your sorrows, bring your triumphs
here.
Until these sorrows all shall disappear,
And greater triumphs, multiplied, abound.

A CRY FROM THE STREETS

Crowns, titles, honors, pride and wealth,
All these ye have, and with them all
That makes ye able to attain
These things. But we have poverty,
Disease, and death, and opportunity
T'increase our woe, by squeezing out
Each drop of our life's blood to feed
Your pride,—and still ye mock our pain!
Do ye call this equality
Before the law? And do ye feel
No pang, when hungry wailings come
From orphaned millions to arouse
Your sleep? Awake, ye men in power,
Before our land is drenched in blood.

IN THE GLOAMING

The day is done, and I, in loneliness,
Prepare to rest and to lament that I
Am friendless and alone. And all around
The deep vast stillness of the night comes down,
And in my soul 'tis dark, and no friend comes.
But hark! I feel a change, and now the air
Is charged with friendly tones and pulsing lights,
And I am glad. For from yon pond, the frogs,
In jolly chorus, serenade the sad
And plaintive whip-poor-wills; and then I hear
Blythe katy-dids with merry cherupings
That mingle in the dreamsongs of the brook;
And then the twinkling stars and lightning bugs
And all, in unison, bid me "Good Night!"

TO THE DARK

O Thou great Dark, I love thy calm,
And my heart loves the fulness of
Thy great immensity, and loves
The boundless reach of thy great pulse,
As it, in wild unmeasured throbs,
Envelops all the world. But Thou
Art not loved all for majesty,
In awe. For in my soul, I feel
The purest love of all, and my
Soul loves thy quiet and calm and rest,
And loves the love that lingers in
The stillness of thy still night air.
Thy stillness and my soul are one,
And I am filled with peace in thee.

PART IV
LOVE LYRICS

TO -----

"I meet thy pensive, moonlit face,"
When thrilled with dreams of bliss divine.
And thru the stillness of the place,
Come whispers from thy soul to mine.

Ah! could my soul but find expression,
And could my tongue its message tell,
High Jove himself would laud the cession
Of love that rings so 'wildly well.'

'Tis not enough to say, I love thee;
'Tis not enough to call thee mine;
Or try with honeyed phrase to move thee,
When thou art queen of dulcet line.

Thou art my light, my love, my life;
The very hope and soul of me;
The heavenly calm of earthly strife;
The sweetest balm of misery.

TO -----

I seemed to hear thy voice, just then,
 Speaking to me.
I seemed to see thy smile again,
 Melting for me.
And now I seem to feel thy hand
 Clasped into mine,
And flowers and birds all understand
 That I am thine.

Yes, I am thine, and all my soul
 Tingles for thee.
Wilt thou be mine, and let thy soul
 Tingle for me?
Ah, then in rapture, sweet, and sweet content
 Sweetly we'll love,
And joyous days, all blissfully spent,
 This rapture will prove.

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

No human hand can now restrain
The love that thrills my heart;
That rouses my enraptured brain,
And quickens every part;

That cleanses this poor human heart
From base, ignoble pride,
And e'en forgives the fiery dart
That wounds my aching side.

My heart's dear love now bids me strive
To win life's wreath of fame;
To grapple life, and grappling live
With high and lofty aim.

What tho foul Opposition flings
Rank insults to my pride!
Lo! I can scorn such little things—
Their burning hate deride.

IN THE MOONLIGHT

The deep, blue vault, ablaze with light
Of myriad worlds in boundless space,
Encompassed all, that Sabbath night,—
The moon shone only in her face.

Yet what cared we for worlds or stars?
Our love had made this one our own.
Of course, there may be girls on Mars;
But then—the moon upon *her* shone.

We walked along, my arm thru hers.
I felt a soft warm hand in mine.
And thus we moved, two worshippers,
Two hearts before one common shrine.

She did not tell me that she loved.
But as I vowed my love supreme,
Her eyes and trembling silence proved
Her soul responsive to my dream.

And then the joyous consciousness
That she was mine, and mine alone,
Found utterance in a long caress;
Her lips pressed closely to my own.
* * * *

Sweet night, thou'rt gone. But still so near,
Thou seem'st a holy thing; and I
In wonder, half akin to fear
Gaze dimly thru thy mystery.

TO SUMMER

Thy passing was sweet, dearest Summer.
But sweeter by far, e'en than this
Were the rapturous, heavenly moments of bliss,
 When whispers of love
 Came down from above,
To sweeten the joy of a kiss.

There's a lingering thought, dearest Summer,
Now dwelling always in my mind,
Makes me wonder if any fair one of her kind
 Were ever so fair
 As the maid who was there
When heaven and earth were entwined.

There are some who may say, gentle Summer
That a dove or a lily white fawn,
Or the dew-laden breath of thy flowers at dawn
 Are sweeter to thee
 Than her smile to me,
Or memories of moments now gone.

But borne on thy breezes, sweet Summer,
And tossed on thy fanciful wind,
A wandering, lingering fancy I find,
 Which says that the dove
 Is her emblem of love,
And the flowers are thoughts from her mind.

PART V
OCCASIONAL PIECES

ADONIS, THE CHILD OF SPRING

Hear as we sing to thee, lovely Adonis,
Gladly the weeping ones hail thee again.
Long have we wept, and long wailed in thine
absence;
Come fairy choruses, join our refrain.

Sad is the world when thy sleep is unbroken;
Bare is the earth when thy flowers are dead;
Lasting our shame, did we hail not thy coming,
Coming with Graces encircling thy head.

Where hast thou lingered, O lovely Adonis,
Leaving all nature so crispèd and sere;
Grieving the heart of thy loved Aphrodite,—
Queen Aphrodite, the fairest of fair?

Spring, thou art lovely, the Loves all in chorus
Sing sweetly of peaceful delights in thy clime;
And the glad songs of birds, and the perfume of
roses
Now mingle to throb in a rapture of rime.

OLD VIRGINIA

In the lap of Dame Fortune, like Canaan of old
Was a spot like a cloud in a sunset of gold;
Lulled sweetly to rest by the long ocean roar,
And tempered divinely by winds from the shore,
Was old Virginia.

The abode of a courteous, cavalier race,
Lovers of leisure, art, and the chase;
Fondly embosomed in green-crested hills,
And lulled into rapture with silver-tongued rills,
Was old Virginia.

And her sons heard the cry of their state in her
need;
Rushed armed to the field, to struggle and bleed;
Found fame in the glorious morn of the fight,
And vanquished lay still in the dark bier of night,
In old Virginia.

But today her descendants still live on her soil;
And rising in ready response to their toil
Her turrets and spires shout aloud to the world,
That Dixie still lives,—tho her banner is furled,
In old Virginia.

TO CHRISTMAS

Swiftly fly from the dead today,
 Moments of time.
These hearts in fancy seem to stray
To the moments that roll in a living rime,
When the gladdest day in all the year
Brings sweetest joys, and peace, and cheer—
 At Christmas time.

Nestle beneath thy robe of white,
 Slumbering earth.
The world's ablaze with a wondrous light,
And glad tongues herald the lowly birth
Of a Holy One here, in the long ago;
Who still in our hearts by the fireside glow,
 Brings joy and mirth.

Welcome us joyfully, loved ones at home—
 Christmas is here!
Singing glad carols, together we come,
From the place of toil to one that is dear.
Brothers and sisters, guests, welcome all;
Hear the sweet little ones merrily call:
 Christmas is here!

THE CHRISTMAS TIME

"The time draws near the birth of Christ,
The moon is hid, the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill,
Peal to each other thru the mist."

The air is chill, the trees bend low,
All nature teems with silent cheer.
Impatiently we linger here;
Toward home our hearts are wont to go.

How gladly do we hail the day
That tingles thru our hot young blood;
That thrills with joy our saddest mood,
And makes the melancholy gay.

How gladly do the wild bells ring!
But far more glad than they
The heart of man in joyful lay,
Lifts up a happy voice to sing.

It sings of joy, and peace, and love,
Of hope that is, of bliss to be;
It swells with praise, O Christ, for Thee,
Our Savior here, our God above.

And may it reach that higher strain,
The shepherd's note of humble praise,
When angels sang, in other days,
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

SONG OF A THOROUGHbred

Ah, Master, I'm waiting to hear you
Say, "G-e-up!" as you did long ago.
I'm wanting to love and to fear you—
Come on, take the reins, let us go.

I'm tired of the pasture and stable,
Where life is so easy and slow;
Let me speed with the winds, while I'm able—
Come on, take the reins, let us go.

Come on, while my blood is a-tingling,
Come on, let the keen breezes blow.
Let your voice and my hoof-beats be mingling,—
Come on, take the reins, let us go.

Let us speed as in days when you loved *me*
And not the new-fangled auto;
When my faithfulness often has proved me,—
Come on, take the reins, let us go.

Come on, let my teeth grip the blue steel;
Let us seem to be one as we go.
And I will feel all that you feel,—
Come on, take the reins, let us go.

THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

The tired day is near its end,
And peace is given to everything,
And I, in quiet joy can lend
My soul to all the night may bring.

There's a thrill in the songs that fall
In golden strains from the dying sun;
And in all the joyful tones that call
To the weary one whose work is done.

There's a joy on the moon-kissed hills,
And in beams that dance on the bay;
There's a soul in the laughing of rills
When their ripples are gliding away.

And the world is a harp, with strings
That are vibrant with heaven-tuned joys;
And the chorus of earth in the symphony rings
With the spell of an unheard voice.

MY GIFT

Ambition once reigning supreme in my soul,
Demanded a tribute to prove that my love
Prized nothing more dear than a place on the
Scroll,
Which nothing, She said, could ever remove.

I sought for the brightest and rarest of gems
To furnish the treasure with sparkling delight;
The sweetest of flowers, I culled from their stems,
To mingle their fragrance with pleasure to
sight.

And all that is sweetest and fairest and best,
Beautiful, pure, or seeming to be,
I gathered with care, and laid with the rest,
A tribute of love and devotion from me.

But a demon came in the shades of the night,
From the moss-covered shelves and caves of
the sea,
And fled with the tribute, my soul's delight,
And left no part of the treasure to me.

And then as my soul bowed down in despair,
And railed at a fate that could bring such a loss,
A heavenly Visitant stood by me there,
Piercèd by nails on a glorified cross.

“Hast thou no gift for the Crucified One;
No tribute to bring, no love labor due?
Did the Father heart bleed in vain for a Son;
Or dost thou think there is nothing to do?

“Rise out of the earth-born scenes of a day;
Be deaf to the siren-like pleading of Fame;
Come thou unto Me, for I am the Way
To those who believe, and trust on the Name.”

I heard and then turned to the Holy One there;
“Must I leave the quiet of rest and a home?”
He lovingly answered, “Thy burdens I share.”
And I murmured, “My Savior, I know, and
I come.”

WHISPERING OF THE BOUGHS

We are not still as the dreamful dark,
Nor silent as clods of our Mother.
We awake with the song of the glad young lark
And carol our love to each other.

We laugh when the sunbeams dance gayly around
To gild the green leaflets all over.
And we quiver in time to the musical sound
Of bees in the warm hearted clover.

We throb when the wild unnoticed beat
Of the soft vocal stillness around us
Is quickened to life as the echoes repeat
The soft whispers of boughs that surround us.

But some day we'll die—as all must die;
Yet why should that bring sorrow?
For then we'll bud and bloom and sigh
In blossoms that breathe on the morrow.



PART VI
RIMES OF COLLEGE



RANDOLPH-MACON

Randolph-Macon, Hail to Thee!
May our love and loyalty,
O'er the altar of a mind,
Ever keep Thy name enshrined.
Fount of knowledge, Source of light,
Guide and Beacon to the right,
In our hearts we hold thy praise;
From our hearts, this strain we raise.

Fostering Mother, Friend of youth,
Ever pointing to the truth,
Thou wilt turn our wandering gaze
To the better, nobler ways;
Thou wilt nerve our feeble hands,
Loose the chafing, thralling bands,
Leave us trembling, joyful, free;
Randolph-Macon, Hail to Thee;

RANDOLPH-MACON

There's music in the name we love,
 Randolph-Macon!
A thousand prayers now soar above,
 For Randolph-Macon.
Away from Thee, we oft may rove,
But never may Thy name remove,
The name of names that memory wove,
 At Randolph-Macon.

Our debt to Thee can ne'er be told,
 Randolph-Macon.
We see the dawn of life unfold,
 At Randolph-Macon.
And as we gaze, we'll soon behold
The distant clouds all fringed with gold,
For out in life we'll feel the mold
 Of Randolph-Macon.

We're sheltered now beneath thy wing,
 Randolph-Macon;
But soon a long farewell we'll sing,
 To Randolph-Macon.
And when these pinions out we fling,
May we from Thy traditions bring
A thought, a soul, a living thing,
 From Randolph-Macon.

TO THE TEAM

Hail to the team, now in triumph, advancing!

Hail to the trophy so proudly displayed!

Brighter than sunbeams, and swifter are glancing

Beams from the pennant that never can fade.

Hail to the rooters there!

Hail to the players rare!

Hail to the pennant that never can fade!

TO THE CUP

Thou long sought token of triumphant play
In classic mold, a truly royal gem.
To thee we tune the victor's joyful lay,
And proudly place thee in our diadem.
What deeds of valor hover round thy frame!
What youthful heroes, seeing thee afar,
Have tingled with the subtle call of Fame,
And fought for thee in bravely mimic war!
What wondrous punts! What rushing plays
to stem!
What long resounding billows of acclaim!

THE BELLS.

(In imitation of Poe.)

Hear the wild and joyful bells,—
Victor bells!

What a tale of mighty prowess their incessant
ringing tells.

In the listening ear of Night,
How they shriek out their delight!

Without power to sing or speak.
But they shriek, shriek, shriek—
And the tune

Is a ringing, burning answer, to the message of the
wire.

In a clamorous invitation, in a call to build the fire.

Build it higher, higher, higher,
And with Fish that never tire,
Make it rattle, rage, and roar;
Make it burn, and blaze, some more,

While the boys gladly singing, march around.

O you cup, cup, cup,
Now that all the rest are up

In the air,

Let the victors ring the bells,
For their triumph proudly wells

From the gladness in the music of the bells,

Of the bells, bells, bells,

From the wild triumphant ringing of the bells.

Hear the early morning bells,—
 Rising bells.
 What a world of resolution, their unearthly call
 compels!
 In the frosty, sleepy dawn,
 How we cuddle, stretch and yawn,
 At the melancholy summons in their tone.
 But soon the weird refrain
 Soothes us back to sleep again,
 And we dream
 Of the future and a girlie;
 She who dwells down in that bosom,
 All alone.
 But then tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In a dreary monotone,
 Comes another summons rolling,
 And the sleeper's heart's a stone.
 Yet he neither wakes nor sleepeth;
 Neither rests supine nor creepeth,
 But he lays in stupor, listening
 To the bells.
 For a shade of darkness tolls,
 And the call to chapel rolls,
 And it rolls, rolls, rolls,
 Rolls a call for every hour in the day.
 And 'tis Hilliard then who yells,
 In the racket of the bells;
 Counting time, time, time,
 In a Randolph-Macon rime
 To the mad expostulation of the bells,—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells,—
 To the challenge, and the summons of the bells.

A TOAST

I do not drink to starlit dreams
That gleam and glow and fade in mists
With Phosphor in the morn. Nor do
I drink to love that Cupid plights
At Hymen's shrine. But I would pledge
A cup to fairer bonds; to bonds,
Unseen, unless in mental vision;
To bonds, unfelt, unless in rapt
Communion. To mystic bonds
That nourish love, unselfish and
Divine. Here's with a cup to this
Eternal Brotherlove, that springs
And blossoms in the sunlit morning
Of our manhood, and growing then
Into the fuller flower, becomes
Immortal in the motto of
Our bonds. Sigma Phi Epsilon,
Loved and cherished, bless us as
We drink to thee.

PHI ZETA GAMMA SONG.

(Written for that Sorority)

Phi Zeta Gamma!
Hear us sing to Thee again,
Blest mystic motto
Be our sweet refrain.

In our hearts forever
Living are the ties we love;
Ties that Time can never
From our hearts remove.

Hear us, Phi Zeta Gamma!
As we sing our love to Thee;
Bless us, Phi Zeta Gamma,
In sweet unity.

In blest communion,
Many hearts by Thee made true,
Now pulse in union,
Pulse in rapture too.

For to Thee, our Mother,
All Thy children gladly sing
Of the joys no other
To these hearts can bring.

Hear us, Phi Zeta Gamma!
Lend Thine ears to joyful praise.
Bless us, Phi Zeta Gamma,
Through all coming days.

I LIBER; AMICI VOS SALUTAMUS

(Written for a College Annual)

Go little book, and may thy pages bear
To all, the greetings that we leave with thee.
May happy thoughts and joyous memories be
Companions to thy journey, everywhere.

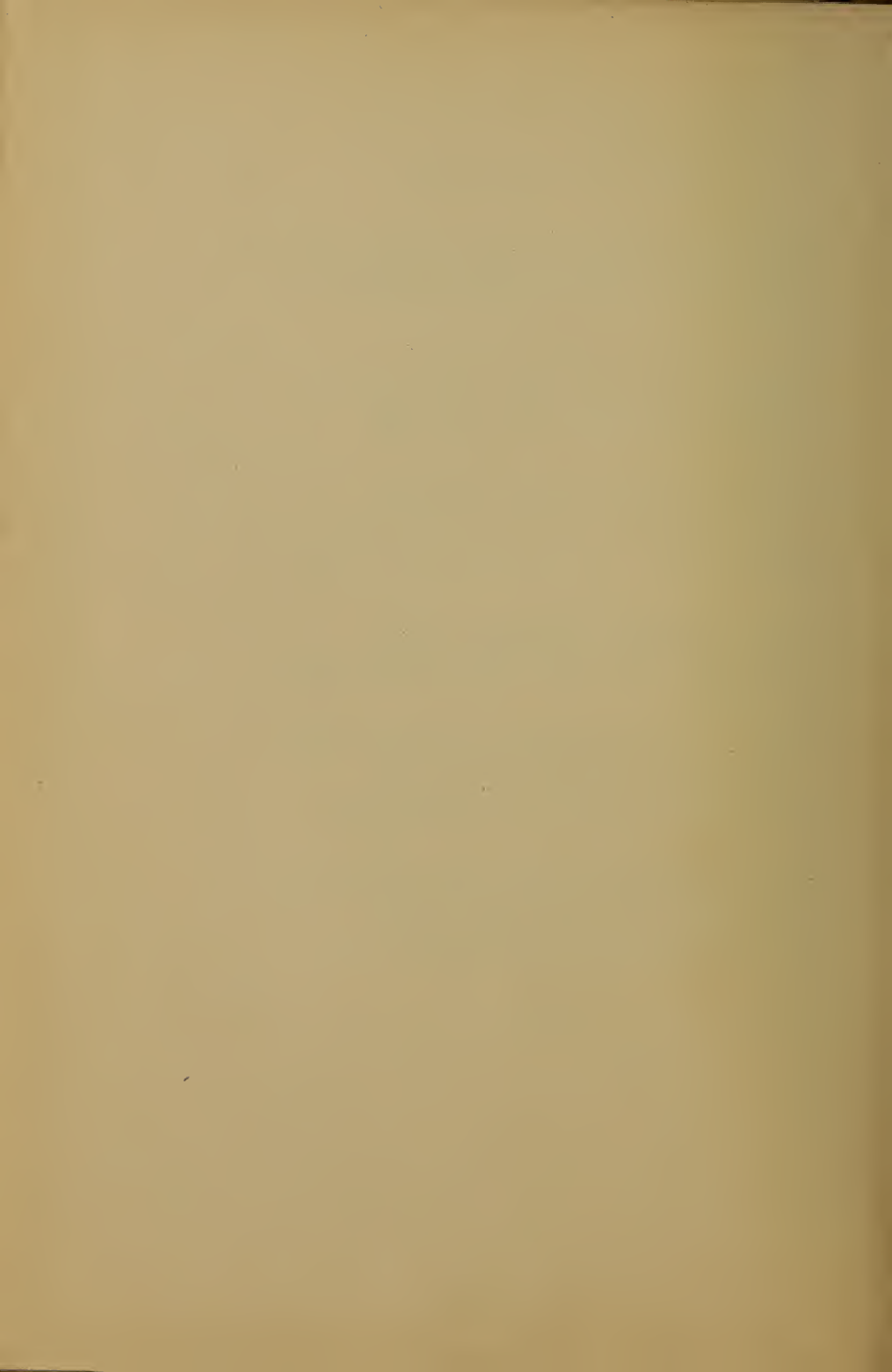
And do not linger if the day be spent,
And darkness seem to steal along thy way.
But journey on to friends of yesterday,
The good and bad, rich and improvident.

For all alike have felt the hot blood rise
When Alma Mater's sons swept back her foes.
And all alike have wept to see them lose,
And joyed again to grasp the hard earned prize.

And so we ask that all will go with thee,
Back to the magic Alma Mater land,
Where joys and sorrows linger hand in hand,
And heedless youth holds wrinkled age in fee.

Friends, we salute you, and as friends implore
You to receive this labor of our love;
This pictured echo of the classic grove,
Where sages nod and hurl the reverend lore.

Ah! friends and classmates of this august year,
Our work is done, the book is thine, and thine;
To you the task of censure we resign,
With greetings for each one who gazes here.





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Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

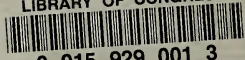
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